

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-26 have been amended in a variety of ways such that it is now more clear that all the claims relate to a **machine vision system** having a plurality of **machine vision** entities, such as those entities shown in Fig. 3A of Applicant's specification. Thus, a **machine vision entity** can be an image data base, a Caliper tool, a PMAAlign, a Fixture, or a Light Meter, for example. Such entities can include generally image sources, image transformations, image processing, image interpretation, image measurements, any general image function, and image storage facilities. Any capability, function, resource, or functionality that can be useful in a machine vision system can be a machine vision entity. Thus, the claims have been amended to make more clear that the entities are **machine vision** entities.

Machine vision entities provide, receive, or transmit image data in accordance with data flow interrelationships between and/or among the machine vision entities. These data flow interrelationships in principle can be hierarchical, or non-hierarchical. The claims now more clearly now require a plurality of **non-hierarchical data flow** interrelationships. Of course, a plurality of non-hierarchical data flow interrelationships among other hierarchical data flow interrelationships is still a plurality of non-hierarchical data flow interrelationships.

Thus, it has been made more clear that the non-hierarchical interrelationships are non-hierarchical **data flow** interrelationships.

It has also been made more clear that the resulting tree-style structure, after non-hierarchical data flow interrelationships are incorporated into the tree-style structure, is an **enhanced** tree-style structure.

It has also been made more clear that the non-hierarchical data flow interrelationships can be **proximate** to the machine vision entities in the tree-style graphical representation, not just on the right side, as in amended claim 6, for example.

Applicant asserts that neither Bradley (Bradley et al. (US 6,584, 507 B1) ("Bradley")) or Dong (Dong et al. (US 6,380,937 B1) ("Dong")) or Gasser (US 6,636,250) ("Gasser")), alone or in any combination, teach a machine vision system, machine vision system entities, data flow interrelationships, proximate data flow interrelationships, non-hierarchical data flow interrelationships, or enhanced tree-style data representations.

Consequently, all of the claims now require elements that are not taught, suggested, or motivated by Bradley, Dong, or Gasser.

Accordingly, all the previous rejections of claims 1-26 are deemed moot, and consequently, all the previous rejections of claims 1-26 are deemed to be overcome.

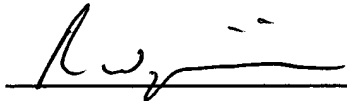
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Reply to Office action of March 30, 2004

The prior art made of record and not relied upon (Gasser) does not appear to present an impediment to the allowance of the present application.

Accordingly, Applicants assert that the present application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to phone the undersigned attorney to further the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully Submitted,

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